

## LOWER CALIFORNIA FIELD TRIP

JOHN THOMAS HOWELL, curator of the Department of Botany, returned March 28 from a two-week expedition in Baja California as the guest of Dr. George Lindsay, an authority on the barrel cacti of our southwestern deserts.

The two botanists traveled down the Pacific Coast as far as El Rosario. Howell studied the transition zone between the California flora and that of the Sonoran Desert.

Dr. Lindsay is slated to become the director of the Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, on July 1.

## ASTRONOMY SECTION

THE REGULAR MEETING of the Astronomy Section will be held at 8 P. M., Wednesday, April 25, in the Student Lecture Room. Leon Salanave, associate curator of astronomy in charge of the Section, will discuss the coming opposition of Mars and the Academy's plans for observations in coöperation with the International Mars Patrol. The Academy's Astronomy Department will set up a 12½-inch reflecting telescope on Junipero Serra Peak. Salanave will describe the planning that has gone into the project thus far and will illustrate his talk with Kodachromes taken during exploratory trips to the peak in January and March of this year.

## NEW SPECIES DISCOVERED

MEMBERS of the Academy's Student Section have been engaged in a study, which if not "scientific" has at least been painstaking and thorough. The study is now completed, and an exceedingly interesting report has been filed—one copy to the Director of the Academy, and a carbon to the editor of the Academy News Letter.

If one boils the report down to bare essentials it comes out like this: The price of a blue Kombi "Volkswagen" is \$2,271.83.

There are supporting data, of course, such as the number of passengers a "Volkswagen" bus will accommodate (more than the vehicle which the Student Section now borrows), its economical rate of fuel consumption, its virtues in so far as etc., etc.

Members of the Student Section obviously hope members of the Academy will be interested in their report.

## NEW MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS were elected by the Council at its meeting of March 8, 1956:

### REGULAR MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Lorenz H. Eix  
Mr. Walter N. Lamore  
Mr. P. N. Lilienthal III  
Miss Deborah Noack  
Mr. John A. Perez  
Mr. Robert J. Wapple  
Mr. William B. Winston

### FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

Mr. George W. Menzel

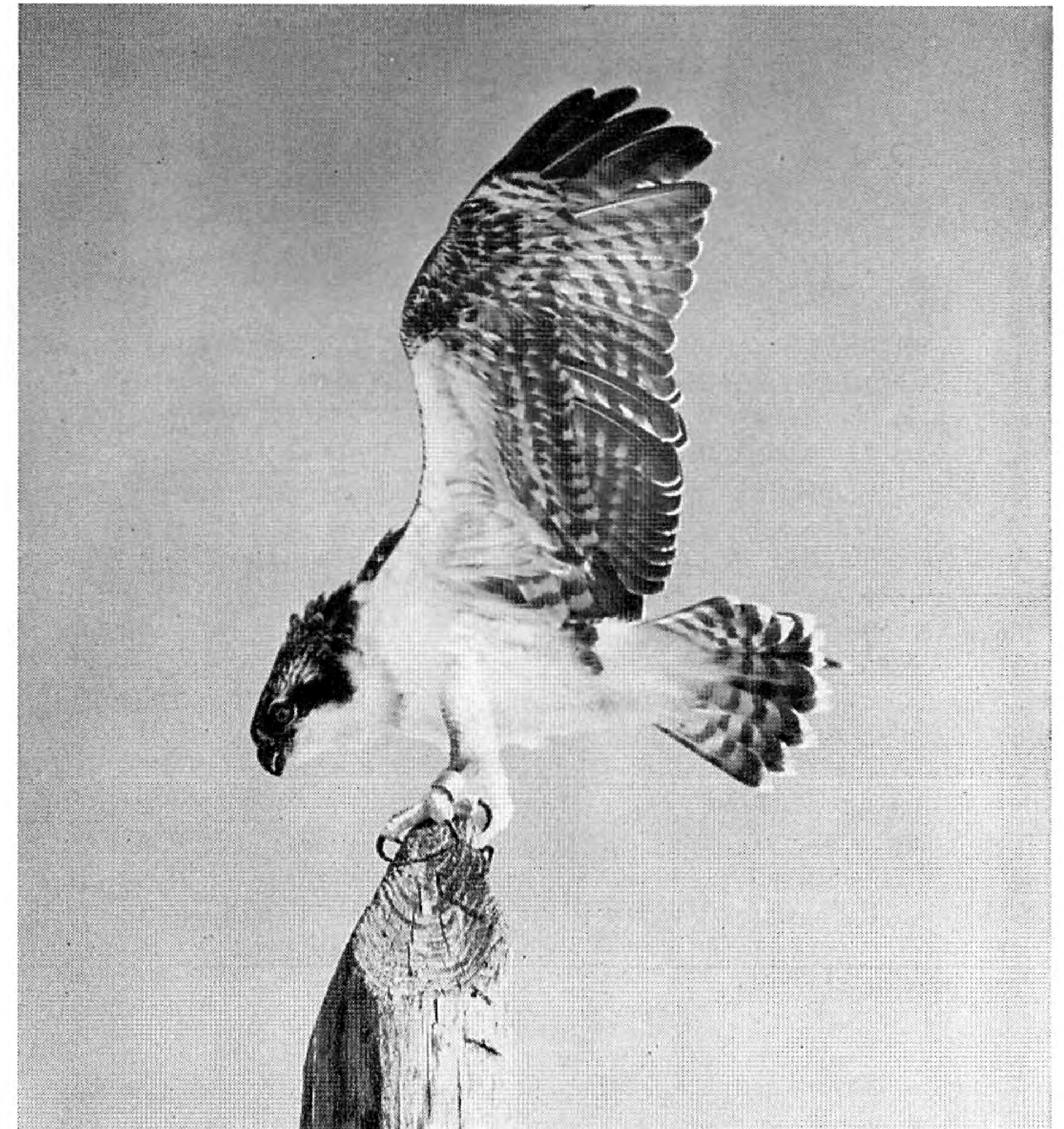
### CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Edward Simons

# ACADEMY NEWS LETTER

NUMBER 196

APRIL 1956



*Photo Courtesy National Audubon Society*

OSPREY ILLUSTRATES LECTURE  
"WINGS AND TALONS"  
(See Page 2)

*Published Monthly by*  
**CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**  
GOLDEN GATE PARK • SAN FRANCISCO



# CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

GOLDEN GATE PARK • SAN FRANCISCO

## *April Announcement*

THE REGULAR APRIL MEETING of the California Academy of Sciences will be held at 8:15 P. M., Wednesday, April 18, in the May Treat Morrison Auditorium. Dr. Harold M. Hill, Audubon screen tour lecturer, will present a color film:

### "WINGS AND TALONS"

Here is a film in which swift-winged predators are the stars—hawks, owls, and eagles. "Wings and Talons" is a fast-moving adventure which takes one on foot and on horseback into the mountains of the West Coast ranges, and by boat to the Channel Islands, secluded haunts and eyries of these dashing birds.

There is the suspense of slipping by rope over the brink of the sheer coastal palisades to peer onto the nesting ledge of the peregrine falcon; and being lowered over the edge of a precipice to explore seldom-seen nesting sites. Such birds as sparrow hawks, prairie falcons, great horned owls, barn owls, and America's national emblem, the bald eagle, are photographed at home and in stirring action.

This film was produced jointly by Dr. Harold M. Hill and Telford H. Work, who is also an Audubon lecturer. Dr. Hill is a graduate of the University of Redlands and Stanford Medical School. He is now a practicing physician in his home town of Redlands.

As a naturalist, Dr. Hill is especially interested in birds of prey and waterfowl. Dr. Hill has studied birds in his native San Bernardino Valley, in the coastal ranges, the Santa Barbara Islands, and in Baja California. For many years an active bird bander, he has tagged hundreds of hawks and owls in the course of his field work.

### FOR YOUR CALENDAR

THE MAY MEETING of the Academy will be at 8:15 P. M., Wednesday, May 2. Dr. J. J. Raimond, Jr., director of the Zeiss-Planetarium of The Hague and president of the Netherlands Astronomical and Meteorological Society, will speak on "The Architecture of the Galaxy."

### THIRD ANNUAL SCIENCE FAIR

As the NEWS LETTER goes to press the third annual Bay Area Science Fair is getting under way. A total of 350 individual and group projects representing the work of some 450 junior high and high school science students will be on

public display here April 7-11. Many more hundreds of students participated in run-off competitions in their own schools. The competition was tougher this year; students from a total of 117 schools in 12 Bay region counties vied for honors.

The two grand prize winners this year will be sent, with their teachers, to compete in the National Science Fair, May 10 to 12, at Oklahoma City.

The Bay Area Science Fair is a community undertaking aimed at encouraging more students to enter science. Dr. Robert C. Miller, director of the Academy, is a member of the Fair's advisory board, and Matthew Carberry, executive assistant to the director, has been in charge of housing the Fair.

### TEMPTING FATE

THE DEPARTMENT OF EXHIBITS and the Academy's Instrument Shop are going to celebrate the anniversary of the 1906 earthquake by unveiling a seismograph on April 18. The earthquake recording machine will be a public exhibit in the Planetarium foyer, but its records will be used by University of California seismologists to augment the recordings of their own instruments.

A. S. Getten of the Instrument Shop will be in charge of the seismograph here.

The instrument, which was supplied by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, has been in operation for several months in the Instrument Shop, and has already recorded several earthquakes. When it is moved to the Planetarium foyer it will be housed in a cabinet open to public view. Anyone "lucky" enough to be in the building while an earthquake is in progress will be able to see the seismograph tracing the record on a revolving drum. Or if you'd rather, you may come in just to see the record charts of past earthquakes, a few of which will always be on display.

The Department of Exhibits is also preparing a collection of photographs and slides taken in San Francisco shortly after the disaster of 1906. They will be put on display beginning April 18 in Lovell White Hall.

### FLOWER SHOW AT ACADEMY

ON APRIL 14, 15 and 16 the Academy will be the scene of a flower show sponsored by the California Horticultural Society.

According to Miss Elizabeth McClintock, the Academy's assistant curator of botany, and secretary of the Horticultural Society, the display will consist primarily of plants growing in containers. However, all of them are plants that can be grown out-of-doors. Just to name a few: there will be auricula primroses, small azaleas, rhododendrons, dwarf evergreens, assorted succulents, choice rock garden plants, and a variety of California natives (plants, that is).

Robert E. Saxe, Bay Area horticulturist who specializes in auriculas and rock garden plants, is chairman of the flower show. It will be held in Lovell White Hall.